

LINCOLN'S BIRTHDAY.

Great Lincoln died a martyr, with a bullet in his brain; The good he wrought for Freedom's cause wiped out a damning stain; Mighty hosts in armed rebellion had yielded on the field, After four years' valiant fighting for the blot upon their shield.

The manacles of slavery were forever cast away, And four million former chattels were rejoicing on that day; The cruel war was over; there was happiness at hand, When a dastard shot a pistol that resounded through the land.

Four hundred thousand loyal lives were sacrificed in strife, To give the stately banner a triumphant lease of life;



The soldier boys were coming home, glad that the fray was o'er, And loud paens to the victors, Spring's fragrant zephyrs bore;

When the ruler of this nation, the grandest man of all, Was called from his high station to repose beneath a pall; The gloom that then spread o'er the land caused grief most hard to bear, And in the loss each family were conscious of a share.

His monument may crumble, as they tell us it has done, But his name is on the tongues of men who know the fame he won; And as his virtues come to light their lustre floods the earth, To teach our youths to honor him on the day he had his birth.

So February twelfth will mark a date each future year, That calendars will bear in red to show when we revere;

For the name of Lincoln calls to mind a man of humble birth, Whose fame is now exalted in the highest niche on earth.

—John McComb.

A KNIGHT OF ST. VALENTINE.



It was to be a valentine party. That was what the girls decided after talking it all over half a dozen times, viewing all the schemes suggested from every possible light and rejecting all except the one Mabel Hurvine had made, that it should be a valentine party. Margaret had said she was dying for a sleighride, not just a poky old ride in a cutter big enough for two, but a good old-fashioned big straw ride, with lots of buffalo robes and all the girls and all the fellows in the crowd. But the sleighride was cut out by those who feared the chill winds would make their noses red and blow their hair about until they would not appear to advantage in the eyes of those for whose benefit the hair was curled and the noses discreetly touched up at times.

Hinda could see nothing but a musketeer. Some of the boys could play guitars and mandolins and the piano, she insisted, and everybody thought he could sing and that would make it nice. She even volunteered to arrange the program of mandolin music and get copies of the "rag time" con melodies to help out those whose knowledge of the fascinating jingles was confined to enthusiastic bursts in the chorus. But the musketeer idea had few friends. It was too much trouble and the girls who could not play mandolins or pose prettily with guitars hung from their shoulders on pale blue ribbons could not see where they would come in except in the chorus, and they each wanted to star, so the musketeer was not a go.

Margie thought it would be lovely to just meet at somebody's house and not have any old set program, but let things take their own course and sing and dance and talk and perhaps eat after awhile. But somebody suggested this might get poky in a short time, and when Mabel Hurvine came to the rescue with the valentine party suggestion it was pounced upon with delight and she was voted a wonder at coming time schemes to help distressed maidens out of difficulties.

"But what do you do at a valentine party?" asked Aileen. "I never went to one since the days when we used to have a valentine box in school and the boys used to send the teacher horrible caricatures and some of the boys used to send some of the girls pretty little cards."

"Oh, well, never mind telling us about your childhood days," said Kathryn. "We want to hear about this party we are going to have. Mabel is sponsor for it and she will have to tell about it."

"Why, it's the easiest thing in the world," said Miss Hurvine, who was small and dark and whose eyes twinkled behind pince-nez glasses. "All you have to do is to invite a crowd of fellows and girls who know each other pretty well."

"That is easy for a starter," said Margie. "For, positively, I don't think any crowd of girls knows as many boys as we do."

"Speak for yourself, please," said Aileen with a toss of her head, but before the controversy progressed further Mabel went on with her explanation of the plan of entrapping unwary young men on St. Valentine's evening.

"Well, you get the crowd together at somebody's house and then you have a small brother or somebody, a sister if you're about half out of brothers, dressed for a cupid."

"I hope he will be more thoroughly dressed than the conventional cupid," suggested Kathryn, "for the party is likely to break up right there."

"Don't be a goose," said Mabel sternly. "He wears a cute white dress and gauze wings."

"And carries a mandolin strapped over his shoulder," suggested Hinda.

"Not for a minute," said Mabel decidedly. "I do wish you girls wouldn't be silly or I'll never get through with this. He has a cute little wagon filled with pieces of white paper cut in heart shapes and to each one is attached a pencil."

"So we can write home for money," cut in Margie.

Miss Hurvine silenced her with a look of disdain and went on:

"He goes around the room with the wagon and each one takes one of the little hearts and pencils, and then they are called upon to write a verse or a valentine to someone in the party. When they all get through the cupid goes around again."

"And collects the garbage," said Kathryn, who had remained a silent listener up to this point.

"Let her tell it," said Aileen, "it's a good story. She's all right. Let her tell it."

"I won't tell you girls another thing and I won't have anything to do with the party if you don't behave yourselves, now," said Mabel. "Well, the verses are all piled up on a table and somebody reads them out to the crowd, and everyone has a chance to guess who wrote each one and to whom it was written. Of course if the verses sort of describe some peculiarity of the person addressed it would help some."

"Oh, that would be lovely," said Aileen; "I can see my finish when they get at my peculiarities. If anybody writes anything mean about me I won't play."

And so it was decided that it should be a valentine party and that everybody should come and that the boys should not know anything about the scheme until they had reached the house, lest they might come "loaded" with verses culled from handy volumes of quotations.

Mabel Hurvine's home was ablaze with lights on the night of St. Valentine's day. The parlor was hung with smiles and ferns, and from the chandelier dangled a mighty heart pierced by a cruel arrow. Everything was ready for the valentine party, and half the guests had arrived.

Margie was gaily singing "I Don't Care If You Never Come Back," while a solemn young man played rag time on the piano. Half a dozen other girls were sweetly telling fibs to as many young men who hung over their chairs or sat beside them and seemed to be drinking it all in. The little cupid, proud of his importance, and immensely concerned over the success of his gauze wings, was waiting in an inner room for his part in the game, when Lottie Meredith tripped zayly up the steps and kissed Mabel Hurvine, who met her in the hall.

"Wait a minute before you go in," whispered Mabel. "Tom is here."

All the dancing light died out of Lottie Meredith's eyes in an instant. Her cheeks turned deathly white a moment, and then flushed red as peonies.

"Tom? You don't mean Tom Prince?"

Mabel shook her head solemnly in affirmation and took both Lottie's hands in hers.

"Yes, he came about twenty minutes ago. I was as much thunderstruck as you."

"But, Mabel," whispered Lottie, dragging Miss Hurvine into a bedroom, where they could not be overheard, "where did he come from? What on earth is he doing here? Oh, tell me what to do, dear. I can't face him before all this crowd."

"I don't know anything about it, Lottie," said Mabel slowly, "except he said he got to town to-day, and one of the boys told him there was a party here and all the old crowd would be here to-night, and he said he made bold enough to come up. Of course I told him I was glad to see him. What else could I do?"

From the parlor came the gay tinkle of the piano and a full, deep voice was singing "O Promise Me." The chatter of many tongues and light laughter floated on the air with the singer's voice and came to the two solemn girls huddled there in the bedroom.

"That's him singing," whispered Lottie. "I'd know his voice anywhere and that was his song always, you know."

For a few minutes they stood there silently listening to the jollity in the parlors. Their hearts beat so loudly that they

heard the quickened pulsations as they stood in the darkness with clasped hands. Then Miss Hurvine said:

"I must go back, dear. They will miss me. Stay here until you are feeling better, and then go right out as if you did not know he was here." And then she slipped out and joined the merry crowd in the parlor.

Five minutes later Lottie Meredith walked out of the room with her head erect and a forced smile upon her lips. Carelessly she strolled into the room where the piano was sounding and let her eyes rest for only an instant upon the figure of Tom Prince, tall and handsome as ever, leaning over Kathryn, who was trying an accompaniment to a song under his direction. He looked up and their eyes met. Lottie tried to return his gaze coldly, as if she had never before looked upon him, but she felt her strength of will leaving her, she felt the hot blood mounding to her cheek, her breath came quickly for an instant and she looked away to where Will Barnes was telling fairy tales to

Margaret. Prince had not changed countenance when he looked upon Lottie. It was not the gaze of a stranger nor was there a smile of recognition in it. To an observer it would seem almost like the curious look of a man who thought he recognized a face and was striving to recall it to memory.

"Now, all you people quit singing and talking and we'll see what cupid has brought us," said Mabel Hurvine briskly. Tom Prince stopped over Kathryn at the piano and said, loud enough for Lottie Meredith to hear:

"I trust he will bring me something more acceptable than the Dead sea fruit with which in the past he has flouted me."

Kathryn looked up and smiled brightly. The words fell meaningless upon her ears, but Lottie heard and knew.

The door of the parlor was thrown open and cupid walked in with his freight of white hearts and tiny pencils and with gay badinage the plan of writing the valentines was explained by Mabel. A silence followed for a few minutes, brows were knitted in deep thought and the merry revelers strove to make rhymes and invent clever lines to carry on the entertainment. There were sly looks and side remarks from those who wished to let the objects of their devotion know that they inspired the muse. There was laughing protest from the girls that some of the boys were "peeking" to see what was being written. And at last Miss Hurvine said time was up, cupid made his rounds again and the white papers fluttered into the little wagon, each bearing its tender or humorous message. Quickly they were heaped upon the table and the boys and girls settled into their seats, when Barnes was called upon to read them.

"Here's one that ought to get at least second money," said Barnes, picking up a heart at random and reading:

My valentine, with storm and shine, Is like a changeful April morning; 'Tis strange, but still I never will Be found her from or sunshine scorning.

"Are they all as bad as that?" queried Margie from her perch on the arm of a big easy chair, where she sat leaning against Margaret.

"Wait till I read some more," said Barnes. "That one was just picked up at random."

"But who is it for?" asked Aileen.

"You can have it if you want it," said Kathryn. "I don't see anyone breaking any records trying to beat you to it."

Barnes had selected another heart from the pile before him and his face sobered a trifle as he glanced through the verse before reading it. Then he said:

"Hold on. This one is all right. I guess it's on the square, too."

O foolish heart that quakes with fear And strives to burst with agony; For sundered ties, oh ecstasy! Be brave, be patient; she is near.

Throb not so dolefully and slow, O heart of mine, so long bowed down, No longer may you wear the crown Of thorns for days of long ago.

At last thy penitence is o'er; At last thy heritage is won, O heart! thy sorrowing is done And joy is thine forevermore.

For a moment there was silence when Barnes had concluded the verse. The smiles had faded from the lips of everyone in the room and glances of surprise were turned from one to another. Tom Prince stood with his arm resting upon the piano and his head in his hand, looking steadfastly at Lottie Meredith. And she knew. She did not dare look across the room at the steady blue eyes which she knew were fixed upon her. She would not trust herself to return that gaze, for her heart was beating madly, although her face was pale.

"Well, we'll all have to give that one up," said Margie. "Anyone who had that written at her ought to be picking out the bridesmaids."

The laugh relieved the strained situation and Barnes caught up a jocular verse and rattled it off glibly. There was some light comment from somebody and Lottie slipped out into the hallway. She was not missed and no one noticed when Tom Prince stepped leisurely to the door of the parlor and followed. He found her there, with wide, frightened eyes which would

not dare to look at him now that they were alone.

"Lottie," he said simply.

"Oh, Tom," she whispered, her eyes filling with tears, "did you mean it? Did you really mean it?"

"Will you try me once more, dear, and see?" he asked.

And as she slipped into his arms with a happy little sigh the piano sounded once more from the parlor, the laughter and the chatter of voices arose and floated by them unheeded on the night air.

His Sentiment and Autograph. Abraham Lincoln once received a letter asking for a "sentiment" and his autograph. He replied:

Dear Madam: When you ask from a stranger that which is of interest only to yourself, always include a stamp. There's your sentiment, and here's my autograph.

A. LINCOLN.

Good manners and good morals are sworn friends and fast allies.—Bartol.

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SUPPOSE WE SMILE.

Humorous paragraphs from the comic papers.

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Driven to It. She—And did you go away to fight because you loved your country so much or because you were afraid of being jeered at if you didn't go?

He—To be honest with you, neither of those reasons was responsible for my going. A life-insurance agent had found me out and that was the only escape I could think of.

Out in Dakota. "No," said the lady who had recently arrived from the East, "I haven't come here for the purpose of obtaining a divorce. I have no—"

"Oh, well," replied the lady who had been there long enough to know all about it, "don't let anybody know and perhaps you can get into society anyway. I shall not expose you."

The Womanly Woman Again. "And what is your definition of the womanly woman?" asked the inquirer.

"A womanly woman," said the gent from the lake shore, "is a woman who dearly loves whatever husband she happens to have."—Indianapolis Journal.

A Novel Mausoleum. "That's a good sized hat of yours, John."

"Ah, Master George, I bought that hat twelve years ago to bury the Missus in."—St. Paul.

Unmasked by Science. The "lady" professor suddenly reached forward and deftly picked a long, light hair from her husband's coat.

"Wretch," she cried, "whose is this?"

"One of your own," he answered, stoutly.

"We will see," she laughingly observed, and speedily vanished through a door labeled "laboratory." For an hour or more the sound of clinking tubes and glasses was faintly heard through the heavy partition.

Then the door suddenly opened and the "lady" professor stood on the threshold.

Her face was blazing.

"William!" she cried, "it was bleach- el."

But he was gone.—Cleveland Plaindealer.